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HANNIBAL IN BITHYNIA.

A PLAY.

BY

HENRY GALLY KNIGHT, ESQ., M.P.

.... magnus
Mirandusque cliens sedet ad Prætoria regis
Donec Bithyno placeat vigilare tyranno.
JUVENAL, SATIRE X. LINE 161.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

MDCCCXXXIX.

462

G. WOODFALL, ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET, LONDON.

HANNIBAL IN BITHYNIA.

MEN.

PRUSIAS, King of Bithynia.

PERDICCAS, his Son, by a former Wife.

HYPSILUS, a Thracian Prince.

ANTENOR,
GLAUCUS,
PAMPHILO,
CLEON,
} Bithynians.

ZENO, a Philosopher.

HANNIBAL, the Carthaginian General.

JUBAL, a Carthaginian.

FLAMINIUS, a Roman General, Legate at Pergamus.

WOMEN.

OLYMPIA, Queen of Bithynia.

LYSANDRA, Sister to Perdiccas.

CLEANTHE, Antenor's daughter.

Nobles, Soldiers, Attendants, Citizens, &c.

HANNIBAL IN BITHYNIA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

AN OPEN PLACE IN BRUSA.

Enter CLEON, GLAUCUS, *and* PAMPHILO.

PAMPHILO.

WELL, Cleon! 'tis a cheerful life we lead
In this Bithynia—feast succeeds to feast!

CLEON.

Yes, Pamphilo! we Greeks of modern days
Have much improv'd upon our ancestors.
Glaucus! what news from Mysia? for on thee,
The friend of him who spares our king the trouble

Of governing his kingdom, I depend
For state intelligence.

GLAUCUS.

He tells me nothing.
I am no more instructed than thyself;
And, as thou know'st, Antenor is from home,
Gone, in devotion, to the Sacred Grove.
But, in the streets, 'tis rumoured that our troops
Have nearly gained the frontier, and, ere long,
We may expect to hear that they have met
With King Eumenes and his myrmidons.

PAMPHILO.

I pity those poor countrymen of ours,
Toiling and broiling in the field of Mars,
With much to do, and not enough to eat.
Here we are better off; supplied with all
The dainties of the land; whilst yonder heights
Never refuse us snow to cool our wines.

CLEON.

Yes—to extract sweet honey from each minute

I call true wisdom—and the king we serve,
The gods be thank'd, is of the same opinion.

GLAUCUS.

Take your full swing, my friends, whilst Prusias lives,
For, if in prophecy I've any skill,
The reign to come will wear another hue.

PAMPHILO.

I share your fears—the melancholy Prince
Seems to have a weak stomach—

GLAUCUS.

He looks down,
Methinks, since the late Queen, his mother, died,
And Prusias rais'd another to his bed.

CLEON.

And then his sister feeds his moody bent!

GLAUCUS.

They dearly lov'd their mother; and, perhaps,

Think her but ill succeeded by a girl
Who brought no dowry but her matchless beauty.

CLEON.

With what a passion does our royal master
Worship the lovely partner of his throne!
Prevent her wishes, think each moment lost
That is not past with her, and task his thoughts
For new inventions to beguile her day.

PAMPHILO.

Yes! and 'tis well for us who live at court.
We share the banquet, and we hear the song.

GLAUCUS.

Well! take advantage of the passing hour;
And fortune favours you—but most of all
Thee, gentle Cleon! for I much mistake
Or the blithe daughter of my powerful friend,
The fair Cleanthe—

CLEON.

Softly, my good Glaucus!
Thou dost infer too much; but we have hopes;
We are not in despair—but who comes here?

PAMPHILO.

The heir apparent, and his Thracian friend,
That wandering Prince, who, having taught himself
To hate the Romans, why, I never heard,
Left home to fight for King Antiochus,
And, when Antiochus made peace, came here.

GLAUCUS.

Our youthful Prince appears to prize him much.

CLEON.

Yes,—more than any of his countrymen.
They are like twins, and of a kindred nature,
Shunning alike the pleasures of the Court,
And still together, holding wise discourse,
And dreaming of old bards, and rusty heroes.

PAMPHILO.

Let us begone! they are not of our kidney.

CLEON.

And, ere 'tis long, the moment will arrive
When we should be on duty near the King. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PERDICCAS *and* HYPSILUS.

PERDICCAS.

Set him adrift again! in grief and age
Bid him go wander! Say'st thou, Hypsilus,
That King Antiochus has thus abus'd
That famous man of whom to hear thee talk
Was such delight to me, and fill'd my soul
With admiration of heroic worth.

HYPSILUS.

These letters bring the sad, disgraceful, news.

PERDICCAS.

Oh! Hypsilus! it sickens me to hear
Of so much baseness. How I envy thee,

Who hast held converse with the Carthaginian,
And seen him in his most familiar guise.
How have I sat to hear thee talk of him,
To me relating all his mighty deeds,
As, from himself, by importunity,
Thou didst obtain the splendid catalogue.
How often hast thou wean'd me from myself
With his astounding passage o'er the Alps,
His oxen, with their lighted horns, and each
Noble device with which he plagued the Romans.
His story was the solace of my life,
For which I am thy everlasting debtor.
Oh! were it not for thee, dear Hypsilus!
And for my sister, I should pine away
Amidst the worthless crowd that harbour here.
'Tis well for me thy kinsman's jealousy
Keeps thee, his heir, in any land but Thrace,
Far from the throne which thou, one day, must fill.

HYPSILUS.

Thy kindness makes me calmly wait the hour

That shall restore me to my native land.
I thought, when King Antiochus made peace,
That all the sunshine of my days was gone,
But some benignant Genius led me here,
And life glides on more smoothly than before.

PERDICCAS.

I owe thee most: for, when thou didst arrive
I was depress'd at heart. My mother's death,
My father's hasty marriage, were enough
To fill my breast with sadness; and, because
I and Lysandra could not lay aside
Our grief as quick as others, we were soon
Coldly regarded, whilst the noisy mirth,
And dazzling revels, that surrounded us,
But added to our pain. I knew not how
To bear so much—and sought, in solitude,
A refuge from the scenes that vex'd my soul.
At such a time did Hypsilus arrive,
And soon, in him, I found the choicest gift
The gods can offer, soon I found a friend.

But of the various themes of thy discourse,
Attractive all, the one that pleased me most
Was still the wondrous Carthaginian chief.

HYPSILUS.

Wondrous he is indeed, and was to me
Kind as a father, in the Syrian camp.

PERDICCAS.

Would I could learn his present hiding-place!
Methinks our days were profitably spent
In pouring balm into his aching wounds.
But see where my sad sister comes, for whom
I have observ'd thy passion—nay, good friend!
I chide it not, but wish thy manly worth
Could steal her from the grief she feeds too much.
Thou shalt have my best offices.

[*Enter* LYSANDRA, *attended.*

Lysandra!

Where hast thou been?

LYSANDRA.

At our dear mother's grave;
Which I must visit still with tears, and flow'rs,
For, here, she seems forgotten.

PERDICCAS.

Not by me,
Lysandra! as thou know'st. Our memories
Are not so short. And here is one, dear sister!
Who has a kindred heart.

LYSANDRA.

Or else, I'm sure,
He had not been my brother's friend; as such
I honour him.

PERDICCAS.

That is too cold a word.
Dear sister! find some other.

[LYSANDRA *hesitates a moment, and then goes out.*

Give her time!
Women must have their way!

HYPSILUS.

Alas! I fear
Her noble nature will not stoop to love.

PERDICCAS.

Faint heart ne'er won fair lady—cheer thee up—
I like her silence, it was in thy favour;
Be of good cheer—and now away with me
To that secluded villa which I like
To call my own—and there, amongst the bards
And sages of old Greece, to lose the sight
Of her degenerate sons. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

AN ANTECHAMBER IN THE PALACE.

PAMPHILO, CLEON, ZENO, *and Attendants.*

CLEON.

The King sleeps well to-day!

PAMPHILO.

Ay, Cleon—
The King does all things well—'tis strange
How he excels the rest of us Bithynians.—
What says old Zeno? who inform'd his youth.

ZENO.

The mighty Prusias had an early wit—
And made a noble progress in his studies—
He still remembers them, and still can hold
Disputes on philosophic themes with me
Till I'm compell'd to yield.

PAMPHILO.

'Tis marvellous.

CLEON.

But, at this time, the graver themes give way
To the soft warblings of the Paphian lyre—
And the blind urchin.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER.

Noble lords! without
There waits an aged man, poorly attended,
Yet in whose port, and eye of fire, there seems
Something that speaks of dignity gone by.
He says he is the noted Carthaginian,
Great Hannibal; arriv'd, this morning, here,
And craves admittance.

CLEON.

What? the Carthaginian?
Arriv'd to beg that refuge from our King

The Syrian monarch will no longer yield him?
This exile troubles all the potentates
Of Asia.

MESSENGER.

Shall he enter?

CLEON.

He can wait.

PAMPHILO.

Ay, let him wait.

MESSENGER.

He seems out-spent with toil,
And the hot sun strikes fiercely on his head.

ZENO.

My Lords, I should rejoice for once to see
This famous man—observe his mind—dissect
Its properties—

CLEON.

Oh! good philosopher,

If 'twill afford thee pastime—Go, fellow!
And bid him enter. [*Exit Messenger.*

PAMPHILO.

See th' admir'd end
Of martial eminence and public virtue.
This man, who stood on glory's pinnacle,
Now knows not where to hide his hoary head.

Enter HANNIBAL, *and two or three Carthaginians.*

HANNIBAL.

Kept in the sun! but I forget myself—
Nobles! for such I judge ye by your guise,
And station here—be friendly to a crew
Of wandering exiles, hunted through the world.
I would confer with Prusias, with your king—

CLEON.

Great Prusias sleeps—He 's bold enough, methinks.
[*Aside to* PAMPHILO.

HANNIBAL.

Sleeps he? then wake him.

PAMPHILO.

Wake Bithynia's king!

HANNIBAL.

My name is Hannibal, the Carthaginian—

CLEON.

Thou must await till Prusias likes to wake.
We do as much ourselves.

HANNIBAL.

All seeing Gods!
Who make me thus your sport, at least be pleas'd
To grant me patience.

PAMPHILO.

Cleon! only remark
How worn his garment is—

CLEON.

And how ill fashion'd!
This a great man!

Enter Attendant.

ATTENDANT.

The mighty Prusias wakes!

PAMPHILO.

We come; we fly. [*Exeunt* CLEON *and* PAMPHILO.

HANNIBAL.

This is our last resource.
Th' accursed Romans who will not believe
That Rome is safe whilst Hannibal survives,
Chase us from hole to hole—nor let us rest
Even in Asia.

ZENO.

Noble Hannibal!

HANNIBAL.

What dost thou want with me, philosopher!
For such I judge thee by thy garb and beard—
What made thee come to Court, and take to flatt'ry?

ZENO.

I was the tutor of the mighty Prusias;
He keeps me near him still—and profits something
Still by my counsels.

HANNIBAL.

Therefore is he call'd
The wisest monarch of the Eastern world.

ZENO.

A man of sense! [*Flourish of Trumpets.*

HANNIBAL.

The moment is at hand!
Oh! why must the proud heart of Hannibal
Throb anxiously at any monarch's step?

Enter PRUSIAS *and* OLYMPIA, *attended.*

HANNIBAL.

Great King, behold a suppliant! Thou hast heard
Of Hannibal, and all the harm he did

To those proud enemies of his and thine,
The cruel Romans, whose unsated eagles
Already hover o'er the shores of Asia.
Behold him now, in exile and in age,
Scarce knowing where to hide his threaten'd head
Safe from the malice of the restless foes
Who cannot yet forget he conquer'd them—
To thee he flies—if thou art generous,
As I believe thee, thou wilt yield an home
To him, and these his comrades in distress.

PRUSIAS.

Rise, Hannibal, illustrious exile, rise!
Bithynia's King is proud of such a guest.
Rest here—the Romans shall not reach thee here—
Thou 'lt find me no Antiochus.

HANNIBAL.

The Gods
Reward thee!

PRUSIAS.

May the Gods forsake me
When I forsake my guest—our dearest Queen
Was mov'd to soft compassion when she heard
Of thy arrival, and thy wrongs.

OLYMPIA.

To shield
Afflicted valour is the noblest act
Of royal pow'r.

PRUSIAS.

More lovely still, Olympia,
For thy just feelings!—From what region, Chief,
Dost thou arrive? Where hast thou lain conceal'd?
For many moons have wan'd since Syria
Broke faith with thee.

HANNIBAL.

Great King! I come from Crete,
Compell'd to fly—

PRUSIAS.

Again! thou never shalt
Have need to fly from hence—and now, Olympia,
I am all thine—where is our moody son?
And our sad daughter? they avoid the scenes
Where cheerfulness prevails.

OLYMPIA.

Let us, my Lord,
To the Pavilion in the grove of Planes—
Its fountains, and its marble floor, will be
Delicious at this season.

PRUSIAS.

Pamphilo!
And Cleon, guide th' illustrious stranger's steps
To the Lybissan castle, which, henceforth,
Becomes his own, and is no longer mine—
Let him want nothing—set on there—we come.—

[*Exeunt* PRUSIAS *and* OLYMPIA.

CLEON.

This is one of his gen'rous fits—but we,
Perforce, must do his will.

HANNIBAL. [*Musing.*

Yet this, and more,
Said King Antiochus!

CLEON.

Renowned Chief!

PAMPHILO.

Illustrious Warrior! we are thy servants.

CLEON.

And wait thy bidding.

HANNIBAL. [*Aside.*

Slaves, pitiful slaves!
Well, lead us, gentle Lords! where we may rest,

PAMPHILO.

Instantly, instantly—name but thy wishes—
And it shall be our study to outstrip them.

HANNIBAL.

We want not much—we have been us'd to little.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A ROOM IN ANTENOR'S HOUSE.

Enter CLEANTHE, *and an Attendant.*

CLEANTHE.

SAY I am indispos'd, or not at leisure,
Or what thou wilt—and bid him call again—
[*Exit Attendant.*
I'll keep him at a distance, call him back—
Again remand him, and avail myself
Of all the privilege of youth, and such
Endowments as kind nature has bestow'd.—
Cleon is well enough—but he must wait—
On this day was my father to return,
And about this, the hour—he likes to bear

The state upon his shoulders, yet, methinks,
The state must be a weary load; and see
How much his thoughtful brow confirms my words.

Enter ANTENOR.

ANTENOR.

Cleanthe! daughter of my heart, how bright
And radiant are thy looks! plain proof that health
And ease of mind have blest my dearest child.
Am I a true interpreter?

CLEANTHE.

Most true,
Dear father.

ANTENOR.

Have the days gone smoothly by?

CLEANTHE.

Thy expeditions have, of late, been frequent—
And made me study how to cheat the time;
A light heart aids me best.

ANTENOR.

But has the Queen,
Our gracious mistress, often sent for thee?
Thy playful words, and equal years, appear'd
To win thee favour in Olympia's sight.

CLEANTHE.

The Queen has been most kind.

ANTENOR.

Again, 'tis well.
Strive to retain the favour thou hast won!

CLEANTHE.

I shall in all things strive to do thy will—
But wherefore is my father's brow o'ercast?
No accident, I trust—nor augury
That boded evil—

ANTENOR.

Nothing.

CLEANTHE.

Wherefore, then,

That anxious look? my father has attain'd
The eminence that men the most desire.
Bithynia's king—

ANTENOR.

I know what thou would'st say—
Prusias leaves all to me, that he may feast
And revel undisturb'd—but, dearest child,
Dost thou forget what envy and what spite
Surround the pinnacle on which I stand?
But wherefore should I chill thy vernal bloom
With images like these? leave them to me—
I must take counsel with myself—anon
We meet again. [*Exit* CLEANTHE.

Thus far my deep laid schemes
Have prosper'd well.—The King of Pergamus,
By me instructed when, and where, to strike,
Has won the day—and now will offer peace
On terms which I must gain for him, induced
By reasons of much weight.—Superstition
Is of great use—for, underneath its garb,

I come and go; and have contriv'd to meet
The Roman Legate, and concert with him
Measures acceptable to Rome's ally.
But Glaucus comes—I must appear to mourn
That which myself have caus'd; a certain length
I trust my friend, but not—

Enter GLAUCUS.

Oh! Glaucus, Glaucus,
This fresh disaster of our troops—it tears
My very heart-strings.

GLAUCUS.

Lamentable news,
Antenor! thus to meet thee at thy threshold.
Whom hast thou seen to tell it thee already?
Or have thy letters—

ANTENOR.

Ill news flies apace—

GLAUCUS.

If thou know'st this, perhaps the late arrival
Of our new guest were stale intelligence—

ANTENOR.

Who is arriv'd? Of this I'm not inform'd.

GLAUCUS.

The Carthaginian, Hannibal.

ANTENOR.

What he?

Rumour had sunk him in th' Ægean deep!

And wherefore is he come?

GLAUCUS.

To ask protection.

ANTENOR.

What said the king?

GLAUCUS.

The king was like himself—

Most gracious; took the exile into favour;

Bade him regard this city as his home.

ANTENOR.

Indeed! but well I know our gen'rous king;

At once he listens to his heart. Well, Glaucus,
As thus it is, we must be in the fashion—
Where is the Carthaginian bestow'd?

GLAUCUS.

At the Lybissan castle.

ANTENOR.

Go before,
And offer him the homage now his due—
I follow instantly. [*Exit* GLAUCUS.

Curse on this exile!
For he may cross my path.—Already rais'd
By the chance humour of a king's caprice,
He, with his arts and mighty intellect,
May prove a rival, and dispute with me
The empire that is mine—let him beware,
For, if he 's troublesome, I'll find a way
To rid me of his presence. [*Exit* ANTENOR.

SCENE II.

A HALL IN THE PALACE.

Enter PRUSIAS, CLEON, *Nobles, Attendants, &c.*

PRUSIAS.

Send for Antenor—these are frightful tidings,
Our troops defeated, and our realm profaned!
And, at this moment, when the cup o'erflows,
Arrives a Roman messenger, and says
A Roman embassy is at his heels.
They speed not here with amicable views,
For Rome has pledged her faith to Pergamus.
But let Flaminius come—and let us hear
What these proud strangers will presume to ask.

Enter ANTENOR.

Antenor, on whose tried fidelity,
And wisdom, we repose, as on a rock,
Where hast thou been? Why absent from thy king
At this eventful moment?

ANTENOR.

Good, my liege—
From the Lybissan castle last I come,
Whither, by duty prompted, I had sped
To venerate thy guest.

PRUSIAS.

Well hast thou done
To honour him, the great, unequall'd, man,
On whom thy king has smiled. Was he alone,
Or compass'd round, as ever he should be,
With friendly homage, and admiring crowds?

ANTENOR.

I found with him the Thracian, Hypsilus,
And thy most royal son; who seems already
Enraptured with the Carthaginian.

PRUSIAS.

What! was Perdiccas there? I gladly learn
That aught can rouse him from his lethargy.
Most opportunely is our guest arriv'd;

For, with the lights of his experienced mind,
He may assist us in this trying hour.
He shall be present at this conference—
Go, some one, straight, and tell th' illustrious chief
We wish him here. [*Exit an Attendant.*

ANTENOR. [*Aside.*

The tide is running strong;
I must not now resist it. [*Trumpet sounds.*

PRUSIAS.

Ha! that sound
Heralds the Legate. Nobles, take your seats,
And let Flaminius approach our throne.

[PRUSIAS *ascends his throne.—Enter* FLAMINIUS *and Romans.*

Well, gallant stranger, what would Rome with us?

FLAMINIUS.

King of Bithynia, Rome, through me, complains
That thou hast sought to injure her ally.
But the brave Mysians have aveng'd that wrong;

And now, desirous ever to arrest
The plagues and ravages of needless war,
I come, empower'd to give Bithynia peace
On one condition, that, to Pergamus,
Thou shalt concede the province next his realm.
Remember, King! thy armies are dispers'd,
Thy foes, elate, and ready to advance,
And, if obdurate from misjudging pride,
Thou should'st reject the terms I now propose,
Whate'er may be thy fortunes in the field,
Dread the sure vengeance of offended Rome.

PRUSIAS.

What says Antenor to these hard conditions?

ANTENOR.

That I would give my life to keep thy realm
Intact, and perfect in its full extent;
But when I read the doom of ev'ry state
That has contended with the Roman power,
I see a dreadful spectacle of ruin,
That makes me tremble for thy royal house;

And rather than my king should suffer harm,
I freely would concede a scrap of earth,
The loss of which Bithynia's glorious Lord
Would feel no more than I the tatter'd robe
I cast aside.

[*During the above speech, enter* HANNIBAL, PERDICCAS, *and* HYPSILUS.

FLAMINIUS.

The Carthaginian here!

HANNIBAL.

Ay, we are met again—illustrious King!
I hear these Romans bear the olive branch—
Yes, they love peace and mercy—but methought
I caught some mention of a scrap of earth,
What means that trifle?

PRUSIAS.

They demand from us
A province for Eumenes.

PERDICCAS.

Of this realm?

HANNIBAL.

Insatiate Rome! hast thou not grasp'd enough?
Are there no bounds to thy resistless course
Till thou hast set thy foot upon the neck
Of all the states, and kingdoms, of the earth?
What! noble Prusias, because once thy troops
Have met with a reverse, shalt thou consent,
Before the eyes of men, at the command
Of strangers, to dismember the domain
That from thy fathers thou hast herited,
And fling away the birth-right of thy son?
Oh! meet disaster with a better front;
Upon thy people call, and thou wilt see
Thine armies quicken'd into strength, and warm'd
With a true spirit, that will swiftly send
These Mysians howling back into their den.

FLAMINIUS.

Thou firebrand of the world! has neither age,

Exile, discomfiture, nor all the ills
That thou hast brought on others, taught thee yet
To leave thy war-cry off—but thou must scare
Peace, and her blessings, from thy neighbourhood,
Let loose the waters of subsiding strife,
And bring destruction on the heads of all
Who ever gave thee shelter and relief?

HANNIBAL.

I am a public enemy, forsooth,
Because I call on those, the few, who still
Remain unfetter'd, not to crouch at once
Before the would-be tyrants of mankind!

PERDICCAS.

Oh! royal father, listen to his words!
Let me go forth—and by the side of him
Whom I admir'd unknown, and known, revere,
At least attempt one struggle for Bithynia.

PRUSIAS.

The Carthaginian's voice has magic in it.

No, we will not consent to purchase peace
With foul disgrace. Roman! thou hast thy answer!

ANTENOR. [*Aside.*

Thwarted by this accursed sorcerer!

FLAMINIUS.

And shall the voice of a defeated exile—

HANNIBAL.

Defeated! when descending from the Alps
I ravag'd all your plains, and took your cities—
Was I defeated when the Thrasymene
Blush'd with patrician blood? Defeated was I,
Roman! at Cannæ?

FLAMINIUS.

Zama!

HANNIBAL.

For that day,
The day that ended Carthage; for I know
Ye do but let her live to show the world

The exhibition of a rival's shame,
And will, ere long, return with fire and sword
To finish her destruction—for that day
Th' eternal hatred which I swore to Rome,
When my young hand could hardly reach the altar,
Burns sleepless here; here, in this wither'd heart,
Unquench'd, unspent, and will for ever burn,
Till life's last gasp.—Flaminius, go thy ways,
And say thou found'st old Hannibal the same.

FLAMINIUS.

In passion, and malignity, the same,
Infecting, and misleading, all around thee—
Prusias, I go—but thou may'st yet repent.

[*Exeunt* FLAMINIUS *and Romans.*

HANNIBAL.

True Roman insolence! they 're all alike!

PRUSIAS.

Antenor! let my people know forthwith
That their invaded country, and their king,

Call on their valour, and their loyalty.—
Tell them the royal standard is unfurl'd;
That our brave son goes forth, and Hannibal
Commands our legions.

HANNIBAL.

Monarch! I am old,
But with this arm I yet can wield a sword,
And in this head resources yet remain
May serve thee still.

PRUSIAS.

By so renown'd a Chief
Led on, my people will excel themselves,
And change, we trust, the aspect of affairs.
Now let us to the shrine of mighty Jove,
And ask the Gods to prosper our emprise.

[*Exeunt* PRUSIAS, ANTENOR, *Nobles, &c.*

PERDICCAS.

How much, how deeply, is Bithynia
To thee indebted, noble Hannibal!

What joy for me to draw my maiden sword
Beneath the guidance of thy practis'd eye!
And what does Hypsilus?

HYPSILUS.

He goes with thee—
But for a few short moments give me leave.

[*Exit* HYPSILUS.

ZENO.

Great Hannibal!

HANNIBAL.

What wouldst thou now,
Philosopher!

ZENO.

As thou art soon to take
The chief command of our Bithynian force,
It may be worth thy while to hear from me
A word or two on military tactics.

PERDICCAS.

Teach Hannibal the art of war? Good Zeno,
Thou hast outliv'd thy wits.

HANNIBAL.

Let him alone.

He 's a most learned man.

ZENO.

I'll ask thee first,

How would'st thou form the phalanx ? answer me !

HANNIBAL.

Why thus and thus.

[*Makes marks on the ground with his sword.*

ZENO.

That's wrong ; palpably wrong !

That way Darius lost Arbela's day.

Observe me now ! his adversary, thus,

Great Alexander, did his phalanx form ;

Strengthened his centre, careless of his wings,

Drew up his legions thus, and led them on

To certain triumph.

HANNIBAL.

Teach me something more !

ZENO.

I 'll teach thee what to shun—whate'er thy case,
Shun stratagems—attempt not stratagems—
In war they never prosper.

PERDICCAS.

It had been
Better, perhaps, for Rome, if Hannibal
Had heard thee, Zeno, lecture, years ago.

HANNIBAL.

Oh! but philosophy is in the right.
I will offend no more—but say'st thou nothing
Of the best manner to subsist my troops?
Cleon and Pamphilo will think thee wanting
Should'st thou omit the noblest theme of all.
Shall they be fed on brains of nightingales?

ZENO.

Such food as can be got—but, mark me well—
Be not in haste—nor hurry the recruits,

Wait for the reinforcements—take thy time—
Then, when thy numbers reach the full amount,
Place thyself thus, and lead them to the charge,
Into the thickest of the battle plunge,
Strike to the left and right—

HANNIBAL.

Brave, brave! good Zeno!
Thou art the wisest of philosophers,
And first of generals. But we must hence
To put these noble theories in practice.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A STREET OF TOMBS.

LYSANDRA *is hanging garlands on one of the Tombs.*

LYSANDRA.

Such be my grateful task! it soothes my soul—
And I must not omit, to this dear tomb,
Still to return with flowers; for were I not,

What other hand would strew them? In this world
How short a space is virtue's brightest pattern
Held in remembrance! Oh! she was the best,
And gentlest of her sex, and lived for others,
But never on herself bestowed a thought.
Therefore, dear parent! o'er thy hallow'd grave
Thy mournful daughter bends in lasting grief,
And loves to hold communion still with thee.

Enter HYPSILUS.

HYPSILUS.

I come not to disturb thee, pious maid!
Pleas'd to behold Lysandra thus employed,
For it bespeaks her full of tender feeling,
And holiest thoughts; but Hypsilus could not
Depart, without beholding thee once more,
And bidding thee farewell.

LYSANDRA.

Depart! what mean'st thou?
Wherefore? and whither? on the sudden, thus!

HYPSILUS.

I go to fight the battles of thy father.
Encourag'd by the Carthaginian chief,
The king to him entrusts the noble care
Of driving back invaders. In this cause
The son of Prusias draws his maiden sword,
And at his side—

LYSANDRA.

What? is Perdiccas going?
Is all Lysandra prizes in this world,
To be exposed?

HYPSILUS.

The kingdom is profaned,
The troops disheartened, and th' audacious foe
Insults thy father with unjust demands—
At such a moment would Lysandra wish
That the king's son should idly rest at home?
Oh! could'st thou see how changed Perdiccas is
At the bright prospect! honourable toil!

Action, and glory! all his gloom is gone,
And rapture sparkles in his gladdened eyes.

LYSANDRA.

I am the daughter of a king, and know
What part is royal—and would have Perdiccas
That part perform—but—and at this dear spot,
Beside the tomb of her who bore us both,
And doated on my brother, if my sex
Is seen in gushing tears, forgive a woman!
Thou wilt be near him, Hypsilus! and thou
Wilt shield him when the battle rages round!

HYPSILUS.

Yes, with my life.

LYSANDRA.

Thy life!

HYPSILUS.

And does the thought
Of what may chance to Hypsilus awake
The least emotion? Oh! unrivall'd maid!

Thou must have seen how long these ardent
Have worshipp'd thy approach—thou must
The feelings that were struggling in my soul
Till now, o'ercome by thy superior worth,
I could not speak the language of my heart;
But now, before we part,—perhaps—(for w
Our real the book of fate)—perhaps for ev

LYSANDER.

Say not so, Hyppolite! Oh, say not so!
For sure the pitying gods—

HYPPOLITE.

[After gazing on LYSANDER.]

Enough! I've
Enough to fill my soul with ecstasy.
In this dark hour, when we must be divide
And clouds conceal the future from our sig
Thy words have kindled in my glowing bre
Such transport as I never knew before.
Yes—we shall meet again, and meet in bli
Now, for thy country! and for victory!

[Exit HYPPOLITE.—LYSANDER, unde

ACT III.

SCENE I.

AN OPEN COUNTRY, WITH THE SEA IN THE DISTANCE.

Enter HANNIBAL, PERDICCAS, *Officers and Soldiers.*

HANNIBAL.

OH! bravely done! the stain of past defeat
Is wash'd away, and we 've achieved enough
To silence the cold counsellors of peace.
We are already masters of the sea,
And shall be soon o' th' land; how many barks
Have we destroyed, or taken?

OFFICER.

Forty sail.
But few escap'd—and those, with broken beaks,
Scarcely rejoined the shore.

Thou must have seen how long these ardent eyes
Have worshipp'd thy approach—thou must have guess'd
The feelings that were struggling in my soul.
Till now, o'erawed by thy superior worth,
I could not speak the language of my heart,
But now, before we part; perhaps—(for who
Can read the book of fate)—perhaps for ever—

LYSANDRA.

Say not so, Hypsilus! Oh, say not so!
For sure the pitying gods—

HYPSILUS,

[*After gazing on* LYSANDRA *for a moment.*

Enough! I've heard
Enough to fill my soul with ecstasy.
In this dark hour, when we must be divided,
And clouds conceal the future from our sight,
Thy words have kindled in my glowing breast
Such transport as I never knew before.
Yes—we shall meet again, and meet in bliss—
Now, for thy country! and for victory!

[*Exit* HYPSILUS.—LYSANDRA *sinks upon the tomb.*

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HANNIBAL.

Ye thought me mad
When I collected from the country round
Myriads of snakes; but, when we cast the jars,
Fraught with the reptiles, on the hostile decks,
Ye saw the hissing novelty had power.
The foe, confounded with the joint attack
Of men, and their new scaly enemies,
Became an easy conquest.

PERDICCAS.

It succeeded
E'en to a miracle—never before
Was such an act attempted.

HANNIBAL.

I have still
Some tricks in store; devices second hand;
Old wiles that I have tried upon the Romans,
And yet will serve Eumenes. Gallant Prince!
How nobly did thy vent'rous bark lead on,

And, like a hawk that stoops upon a dove,
Fix her sharp talons in the trembling prey.
It does delight me, in my latter years,
To be thy tutor in this noble art.

PERDICCAS.

Oh! who that was not dull as the cold earth
Would not be fashion'd into something good
Beneath thy guidance?—Thy renown had caught
My fancy—but thyself, and now thyself
In thine own proper sphere, has lent a spark
That, kindling all my nature into flame,
Gives me a new existence.

HANNIBAL.

Yes, Perdiccas!
Now I'm again a soldier, as I should be—
At my old sport—with business on my hands,
And harness on my back—my cares are gone,
And the warm blood runs dancing through my veins
As in brisk youth. Our messenger will soon

Arrive at Brusa, and inform the king
Of our first skirmish with his enemies;
And when our promised reinforcements join,
We will to work in earnest. But I miss
The Thracian; and if any harm to him—

PERDICCAS.

I would not give it tongue; but, for my friend,
Am in most anxious fear; the gods protect him!
Since the fight ceased, I look for him in vain.

Enter HYPSILUS *with two or three soldiers.*

HANNIBAL.

My boy, my Thracian! welcome back again—

PERDICCAS.

Where hast thou been?

HYPSILUS.

So near Eumenes' camp
That I could single out the royal tent.
We were disguised as men of Pergamus,

The better to elude observant eyes.—
As, on the outskirts of a wood we watch'd,
A horseman, on a steed half-spent with toil,
Rode up, and cried, "Conduct me to Eumenes!"
"Whence art thou?" we demanded. "Fresh from Brusa,
Bearing a letter for your king!"

HANNIBAL.

Well said!
A traitor's faithful pigeon!

HYPSILUS.

Him we slew.

HANNIBAL. [*To the Officers.*

Friends, give us leave!

[*The Officers retire.*

Now, where 's the letter?

HYPSILUS.

Here.

HANNIBAL. [*Reads the letter.*

"King Eumenes—Avoid a battle—wear out the

Bithynian zeal—fear nothing from reinforcements.
—Thy friend."

No signature—but I can fill it up.
Prusias is well surrounded! Base mankind!
True moles that work i' th' dark! the mean and vile
Thus govern all—and thus are empires lost.
Bad passions are the secret springs that set
All things in motion. Smiling perfidy
Trips up the heels of honour;—selfishness
Betrays a realm to gain a private end.
Thus have I found it ever. World! oh, world!
The same dull round of littleness and crime!
Virtue checkmated ever! Hypsilus!
The name here wanting is Antenor.

HYPSILUS.

No!—
'Tis not in nature!

PERDICCAS.

He on whom my father
Heaps wealth and honours!

HANNIBAL.

Yet am I convinced
As I had seen him write it; but, no matter!
We 'll take advantage now of what was meant
To serve the enemy—summon the chiefs—
We must provoke a battle—valiant friends,
Shall ye be wearied with another day?

FIRST OFFICER.

We 're ready at thy word.

SECOND OFFICER.

The troops are fresh.

THIRD OFFICER.

Give but the signal.

HANNIBAL.

Gallant hearts! and these,
These are the men whom they would have consigned
To foul disgrace—and now to die by inches.
Before the dawn, we must approach the camp,

And, when the angry bees come swarming forth,
Retreat as in dismay—if they will follow
Where I will lead, to yonder woody vale,
As scorning our inferior force, they may—
Bithynia will be saved. Now to your tents—
And let the troops sup early, and sup well,
And then to rest, that they may be refreshed
Against their early rising; for to-morrow
Will be a bustling day. Come, my brave boys,

[*To* HYPSILUS *and* PERDICCAS.

For we must go the rounds ere we repose—
See that the sentinels are at their post,
And all things as they should be—then return
To our light meal, and then an hour or two
Of good, sound sleep, and we shall be prepared.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

OLYMPIA *is discovered in a pensive attitude.*

OLYMPIA.

How heavily the moments drag along!
Here mirth and pleasure wing'd the festive hours,
And I, the centre of the brilliant ring,
Receiv'd each moment some delightful proof
Of a devoted monarch's watchful love—
But garlands decorate these halls no more,
And Prusias thinks of nothing but his troops,
War, and Bithynia.—Little did I think,
When I beheld the Carthaginian exile
Raised from the earth, that he would have the power
To change the colour of Olympia's life,
And rob me of the empire I possess'd.

Enter CLEANTHE.

Approach, Cleanthe, ever welcome here;
Yet wherefore is thy radiant brow o'ercast?
Thou wert the sunbeam of our court, and ever
Hadst some gay fancy, or amusing word,
To please us with.

CLEANTHE.

Oh! gracious queen! this war,
This odious war! it saddens ev'ry face,
And frightens mirth away.

OLYMPIA.

I freely own
That in this palace I perceive a change—
But how can it have reach'd Cleanthe's bower,
That from the roughest tempest seemed secure?

CLEANTHE.

Poor Cleon, gracious lady—I was foolish,
And trifled with his love—and now he 's gone;

He was compell'd—and now he will be kill'd—
I know he will.

OLYMPIA.

Resolve not on the worst,
Poor girl! but now I comprehend thy looks,
And from my heart I pity thee.

[*Enter* LYSANDRA.

Lysandra!
To what may we ascribe so rare an honour?

LYSANDRA.

Excuse th' intrusion which I seldom make;
But, at this painful moment of suspense,
I left my cherish'd solitude to ask
For any tidings from the camp—excuse
An anxious sister!

OLYMPIA.

Nothing has arriv'd.
Nothing, at least, to us has been imparted.

CLEANTHE.

Oh! wicked war! unnecessary war!
Far better to have let them had the land
Eumenes ask'd, than suffer all this pain.

LYSANDRA.

Cleanthe! pass no sentence in a cause
Beyond our scope—the distaff and the loom
Are women's province—war belongs to men.

CLEANTHE.

The Queen, whose empire o'er Bithynia's lord
Must be supreme, will use it to preserve
The darling objects of our tender care,
If any yet survive.

OLYMPIA.

Alas! Cleanthe!
I have no more the influence that I had.

LYSANDRA.

And if thou wert supreme, illustrious Lady,
Would'st thou arrest this effort to be free?

Is not the honour of the King at stake?
The realm's integrity? Thou would'st not have
This land, this lovely garden, this Bithynia,
In pieces torn, and trodden under foot?

CLEANTHE.

The Princess ever soars above her sex.
Her mind is lofty, and her heart is free—
But if, like me, and many another one,
She had a Cleon, whose dear, precious life
Was now in danger—

LYSANDRA.

I should do, Cleanthe,
As I do now—weary the Gods with prayers,
To prosper those in peril for their country.

Enter ANTENOR.

ANTENOR.

Illustrious Queen! I trust my hapless child
Has not outstepp'd her privilege—but she

Was half distracted by her anxious grief,
And heeded not a father's words.

OLYMPIA.

Antenor!
Grief and distraction spreads o'er ev'ry mind.
All things are chang'd. This palace is no more
The cheerful scene of gaiety and joy;
And I, whose slightest wish was once prevented,
Am now no more regarded than the breeze
That passes and is gone.

ANTENOR.

Has it indeed
So far extended? Is our lovely Queen
Within the circle of the potent spell?
Has youth and beauty no remaining power?
Must charms like those be vanquished by the wiles
Of an insidious, old, dependent exile?
But he is master of the royal mind,
And we, his poor inferiors, must submit
To such allowance as seems fit to him.

LYSANDRA.

Old, and dependent as that exile is,
He still, perhaps, may save a menaced realm.

ANTENOR.

Lady! the realm may not be less in danger
For any short-lived triumphs now obtained.
Therefore it was that I inclin'd to peace.

LYSANDRA.

I wish for peace, Antenor! could'st thou read
My inmost soul, thou would'st perceive how truly.
But let it be an honourable peace;
None other.

CLEANTHE.

Any thing that would bring back
Poor Cleon.

OLYMPIA.

Any thing that would restore
The lot that once was mine.

ANTENOR.

The King himself
Will soon arrive—for, at this very hour,
I was commanded to attend him here.
We then shall learn how far he still approves
The vent'rous game on which he stakes so much.

OLYMPIA.

I cannot meet him now—but will hereafter,
When I have taught my feelings to be calm.
Do thou, Antenor, with thy faithful counsels,—
Do thou endeavour to relieve thy king
From his delusion. Come, Cleanthe! come—
And thou, Lysandra, if it be thy pleasure.

LYSANDRA.

I would,—but to the temple of the gods
Must first direct my steps, and, suppliant there,
Beseech them to protect the brave and good.

[*Exeunt* OLYMPIA, CLEANTHE, *and* LYSANDRA.

ANTENOR.

That lady is too like her wayward brother;
They must be look'd to—the dejected Queen
Will be of use; but I have laid a snare
That, of itself, will bring me to my wish.
Ere this Eumenes has receiv'd my letter,
And, if he heeds it, as, no doubt he will,
No laurel wreath will grace my rival's brow,
And, unsupported by success, he falls,
Dismiss'd from favour soon, and cast aside.
Meantime must I, with cautious words and apt,
Prepare his way to ruin. Hannibal!
Thy art is war; mine, of another kind;
Less glitt'ring, more secure. The King is here!

Enter PRUSIAS.

PRUSIAS.

No tidings yet? but some will soon arrive,
And, once embark'd in this great enterprise,
This struggle for the country and the crown,

ANTENOR.

Grant him full success.

PRUSIAS.

What ill canst thou predict from good?

ANTENOR.

I wish

To see my king the first within his realm.

PRUSIAS.

And so I am—and so shall I remain.
Who could dispute with us?

ANTENOR.

Thyself hast said
The names of Hannibal and of the Prince,
Have met thine ears already in the streets.
How will it be if, crowned with victory,
The idols of the people, they return?

PRUSIAS.

Thou canst not think—

ANTENOR.

An over-anxious love
Fills me, perhaps, with more than just alarms.

[*Enter a Messenger.*

PRUSIAS.

Ha! from the camp?

MESSENGER.

These letters from the chief—
The naval force of Mysia is destroyed.
The Prince was foremost in the fight; to him,
And to the mighty Carthaginian,
The army are devoted; and, ere long,
Hope to inflict another blow, by land.

PRUSIAS (*after reading the letters*).

Did I expect too much from my Bithynians?
And does not this beginning with it bring
Good promise for the future?

ANTENOR.

What is done
No doubt is well. Good fellow! saidst thou not
The army are devoted to their chief?

MESSENGER.

They view him as a god!

PRUSIAS.

Thou may'st retire,
And take the rest thy labours well deserve.

[*Exit* MESSENGER.

ANTENOR. [*Half aside.*

How high doth one success toss up a man!
One day, an outcast, and the next, a god!

PRUSIAS.

'Tis like the fiction of a dream—but what
Would'st thou infer from thence?

ANTENOR.

Nothing, my liege!
An idle thought! yet changes great and sudden
Make us remark them.

PRUSIAS.

If I could believe
That, in their wonder at heroic deeds,
My fickle people could forget their king,
Or that Perdiccas, on their shoulders borne,
Would seek to push a father from his right!
But no—I will not entertain the thought.

ANTENOR.

Great King! disturb not thy parental mind
With fears that may be vain! nor waste a thought
On what the Romans, in their wrath, may dare.
This day is bright; should darker hours succeed,
Face them, and cure the evil when it comes.
Meantime, in tranquil happiness await
This mighty victory that is to follow.

PRUSIAS.

Thou counsell'st well, Antenor! but, be watchful!
And should thy lynx-eyed vigilance detect
A sign,—a symptom, of approaching danger,
On thy allegiance, I charge thee, warn us.—
Now will I to the Queen—from whom too long
By public duties we have been detained.
Farewell! be vigilant!

[*Exit* PRUSIAS.

ANTENOR.

Enough is done!
He goes not hence as tranquil as he came.
The seed is sown; and, should occasion need,
Will bear the fruit I wish.

[*Exit* ANTENOR.

SCENE III.

A WOODY COUNTRY.

Shouts and Alarms.—The Bithynian soldiers cross the stage, as if flying in disorder; then the soldiers of EUMENES, *tumultuously crying out,* Pursue! Pursue! *After a short pause, a great shout is heard—then clashing of swords, &c.*

Enter CLEON *and* PAMPHILO, *running.*

PAMPHILO.

Where shall we hide ourselves?

CLEON.

They come this way!

PAMPHILO.

Oh! horrid sounds!

CLEON.

Accursed Carthaginian!
That brought us into this!

PAMPHILO.

Nearer, and nearer!

CLEON.

Nay, then; I will not wait!

PAMPHILO.

I'll skreen me here!

[CLEON *runs out;* PAMPHILO *gets up into a tree. The soldiers of* EUMENES *retreat over the stage, pursued by the Bithynians.*

Enter HANNIBAL *and* PERDICCAS.

HANNIBAL.

Press on, Bithynians! smite! confound! destroy!
Have at the royal standard! how they skip!
Oh! friends of Rome! what boots th' alliance now?

PERDICCAS.

On brave Bithynians!

[*Exeunt* HANNIBAL *and* PERDICCAS.

Enter a wounded Bithynian, with a dart in his leg.

BITHYNIAN.

Out upon this dart,
That leaves me life and hands, but stops my course.
Here must I wait; nor have a further share
In this good work. What 's there? methinks yon oak
Bears a strange acorn—thus I'll shake it down!

[*Aims a javelin at* PAMPHILO.

PAMPHILO.

Oh! mercy, mercy—sweet Bithynian—spare me!
I am thy countryman—I 'm Pamphilo.

BITHYNIAN.

Thy pardon, Lord! I know thy greatness now;
One of the scented minions of the Court!
For once thou shalt be useful, and, since I
Can crawl no further, from thine airy post
Thou shalt inform me how the battle fares.
Look out! and tell me what thou seest, or this
Shall come to visit thee.

PAMPHILO.

What! Pamphilo
A fellow's instrument!

BITHYNIAN.

Be quick, and look,
And speak, or this—

PAMPHILO.

Well then—no help—I see
The hostile forces tumbling down the side
Of the rough hill, and our Bithynian men
Pressing upon them with bright spears and swords—
Oh! 'tis a shocking sight!

BITHYNIAN.

Seest thou aught
Of our young Prince?

PAMPHILO.

Oh, yes! I see him now
Amongst the first and foremost—in the midst,
And thickest of the fight.

BITHYNIAN.

That 's where he should be!
'Tis thus he wins our hearts—but seest thou aught
Of Hannibal?

PAMPHILO.

Not yet—I now behold
That savage exile.

BITHYNIAN.

Be respectful!

PAMPHILO.

Now;
What can it mean? he falls!

BITHYNIAN.

He falls!
Can the gods bear such hatred to Bithynia?
Dare not to trifle with me—is it truth?

PAMPHILO.

I saw him fall.

BITHYNIAN.

Oh, gods! then all is lost!
He was the soul of all.—Gods! let me die.

PAMPHILO.

Now Hypsilus springs forward down the hill,
Heading his legion—now upon the plain
The forces mingle—ours, a dark'ning mass;
Their's, thin and broken—still they turn—it sinks!
The Mysian standard sinks amongst the crowd!
And now disordered o'er the plain they fly—
Pursued, and scatter'd—miserable men!
How frighten'd they must be.

BITHYNIAN.

Then vict'ry crowns
The cause of Prusias—and the day is won.
But oh! great Hannibal!

PAMPHILO.

Let me come down,
Good friend!

BITHYNIAN.

Not yet! this way, with joyful shouts,
I hear our men returning—by the gods
Thou hast deceived me with a lie! he lives!
He's here! I 'd kill thee for thy petty malice,
But I 'm too full of joy to injure e'en
A thing like thee.

Enter HANNIBAL, PERDICCAS, *and Bithynians.*

HANNIBAL.

Now Prusias may demand
A province from Eumenes, if he will—
Oh! brave Bithynians! ye have served your king
Nobly and manfully—the day is yours—
Shout forth Victoria, and long live Prusias.

[*They cry* Victoria.

HANNIBAL.

Now, now, I feel a something of the glow
I felt in Italy—that, o'er my soul
Comes like a warm and welcome recollection—

Once, once again, I hear the martial shout—
Behold stern faces lighted up with joy—
Once more a conqueror.

PERDICCAS.

Illustrious Chief!
How shall I thank thee on my sire's behalf,
How thank thee on my own?

HANNIBAL.

No less is due
To thee, brave Prince—for thy example tun'd
The troops to conquest pitch—where's Hypsilus?

OFFICER.

He still pursues the routed enemies.

HANNIBAL.

Would he were back and safe—I long to thank him—
What have we here?

BITHYNIAN.

A miserable man,

Who, wounded early in the fight, could crawl
No further.

HANNIBAL.

What thou couldst, thou didst:
Thou shalt wear laurel with the rest. Thy wound
Confirms thy words.

BITHYNIAN.

There is another here.

PERDICCAS.

Where?

BITHYNIAN.

He's up aloft, as suits his dignity.
He told me that our general was slain.

HANNIBAL.

I nearly was. Ha! my Lord Pamphilo!
So bird-like in thine arbour of green leaves!
Prithee, come down! the day, perchance, was hot;
You found it shady there, and cool! well, well—

Live on and flutter as thou didst before.
Bear that poor fellow home upon a shield,
Like a true soldier.—Ha! 'tis Hypsilus!

[*Enter* HYPSILUS *and Soldiers.*

What joy to see thee safe, my Thracian boy!

HYPSILUS.

I strove to catch Eumenes—but his steed
Outgalloped ours.

HANNIBAL.

Oh! we have done enough!
Eumenes never need be feared again.
How shall an old man thank thee for his life?
Hadst thou not been at hand when I was down!

HYPSILUS.

The lucky chance was mine.

PERDICCAS.

Come to my heart,
Brave friend! dearer than ever! how much more
Perdiccas owes thee now!—for him thou wilt,
I trust, but by another, be repaid.

HANNIBAL.

Give we a breathing to th' exhausted troops,—
And then, our task accomplish'd, back to Brusa.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

THE SQUARE BEFORE THE PALACE.

Enter ANTENOR *and* GLAUCUS, *meeting.*

GLAUCUS.

THE fates conspire against us—from the gates
I come this instant—the returning troops
Already are in sight, and all the city
Wait for victorious Hannibal.

ANTENOR.

The gods
Confound him, and that hasty Pergamus,
Who gave the battle when he should have paused,

And wearied out the hot Bithynian zeal.
I fear my messenger—but I must hence,
And add new fuel to the doubts and fears
That Prusias nourishes.

GLAUCUS.

The throng approach!

ANTENOR.

Away, away! we should be near the King. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HANNIBAL *in Triumph*—PERDICCAS, HYPSILUS, *Officers and Soldiers, with laurel round their helmets—Citizens, &c.*

CROWD.

Long live Hannibal! Long live Perdiccas!

HANNIBAL.

Thanks, courteous citizens and men of Brusa!
We 've lash'd th' ally of Rome—and clear'd your land
From hostile feet. But not to me ascribe

The merit; thank your brethren; thank your Prince;
Their swords achiev'd the triumph;—I did little;
And never was I served more zealously
Than by those valiant countrymen of yours
Who now surround me.

SOLDIERS.

We would follow thee
Throughout the world!

HANNIBAL.

Brave hearts! but we must on
To lay our trophies at your Monarch's feet.
I would behold my kind protector's smile.
He 'll have no more audacious embassies
From humbled Pergamus.

CROWD.

Long live Perdiccas! Long live Hannibal!

[*As* HANNIBAL *dismounts from his Car, the Palace Gates are closed.*

HYPSILUS.

Why, what means this?

The gates are closed against us!

Enter, from the Palace, ANTENOR *and* GLAUCUS.

HANNIBAL. [*Aside to* HYPSILUS.

Hypsilus!

Think'st thou Antenor is rejoic'd to see us?

Antenor! I would fly with grateful haste

To pay my duty to your King.

ANTENOR.

The King

Has sent us, Chief! to offer thee his thanks.

But he is indisposed—he will receive thee

When he is more at leisure.

HANNIBAL.

Indispos'd!

And not at leisure! We have sav'd his kingdom!

Has he not leisure to receive the son

Who, for his father, has exposed his life?

Not time to pay these soldiers with a look,
But for whose valour he had been a vassal?
Go back, and tell him that the Prince is here.

PERDICCAS.

This cannot be my father's proper act,
Nor yet his wish—Antenor, I'll be sworn,
Exceeds his orders.

ANTENOR.

We have just receiv'd
The King's commands—he will not be disturb'd.

PERDICCAS.

'Tis thou that dost debar us from the King,
That art a traitor to him.

HANNIBAL.

Prince!

ANTENOR.

Such words
But ill become the son of Prusias.

PERDICCAS.

Upbraided? and by thee!

[*Offers to draw his sword;* HANNIBAL *restrains him.*

ANTENOR.

I grieve to see
That princes can forget themselves.

A voice from the Crowd.

Shame! Shame!
Admit the Chief! admit the Prince—

ANTENOR.

Vile slaves!
Dare ye, the dregs of nature, as ye are,
Dispute the will of Prusias?

Many Voices.

Shame! Shame!

[*The murmurs increase.*

HANNIBAL.

Good friends! forget not what ye owe your King.
I would have gladly stood before his throne;
But, whatsoe'er his will, your duty is,
And mine, to show obedience. Therefore, friends,
Disperse ye to your homes—and, gallant soldiers,
Let us withdraw where we may find repose;
'T were welcome after toil—away! away!

[*Exeunt* HANNIBAL, PERDICCAS, HYPSILUS, *Troops, and Citizens* — ANTENOR *and* GLAUCUS *return into the Palace.*

SCENE II.

A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

Enter PRUSIAS *and* OLYMPIA.

PRUSIAS.

Have I done justly? to condemn unheard
Those who have rescued our invaded realm?

Thus to repay the saviour of Bithynia?
Thus to mistrust my son, returning home
From his first battles? Open wide the gates!
I see my own ingratitude.

OLYMPIA.

If I
Retain the slightest remnant of thy love,
Run not so mad a risk! or else unloose
The golden circlet that adorns thy brow,
And cast it down before an exile's feet.

PRUSIAS.

Thy sex, Olympia! hears in ev'ry breeze
The terrors of a tempest. Yes—I must,
I will, behold my brave Bithynian troops,
With their wreath'd helmets and their sparkling eyes,
And hear the shout with which they will receive
The king for whom they fought, for whom they conquer'd.

OLYMPIA.

Then hast thou cast Olympia from thy heart.
Thus do I throw myself upon thy neck—

Enter GLAUCUS *and* ANTENOR.

ANTENOR.

Prusias is safe!

PRUSIAS.

When has he been in danger?

ANTENOR.

The fickle, and rebellious crowd, incens'd
Because their monarch did not bow before
The god of their idolatry, broke out
Into blind rage—methought they would have storm'd
The Palace gates—I trembled for my King.

OLYMPIA.

Oh! mine were woman's fears!

PRUSIAS.

And Hannibal,
How brook'd he the exclusion?

ANTENOR.

As if he
Had been Bithynia's lord, and thou the stranger.

GLAUCUS.

The Prince, with grief I speak, exceeded all.
Greeted Antenor with the name of traitor,
And drew his sword upon him—

PRUSIAS.

Drew his sword!
And call'd him traitor!

OLYMPIA.

He must be possess'd
By some bad pow'r, that makes him dangerous.

PRUSIAS.

Antenor! I perceive that thou art vers'd

Too well in human nature—thy alarms
Pictur'd no more than the portentous birth
Which this distemper'd morning has brought forth.
Danger surrounds the throne—and from a source
That curdles all the current in my veins,
And makes me doubtful where to look for help.
What course shall we pursue?

OLYMPIA.

There is no hope
Nor chance of safety, whilst the noxious snake
That thou didst warm and harbour in thy breast
Is still permitted to infest our path—

PRUSIAS.

I said he never should be forc'd to fly.

OLYMPIA.

Prusias, or he, will have to leave Bithynia!
Or thou hast done too much,—or must do more.

ANTENOR.

No more at present can be done—for great,

And potent, as thou art, illustrious king,
I would not answer for thy sacred life,
If, at this moment, when the furious crowd
Are madly clinging round the Carthaginian,
Thou should'st attempt, by any sudden act,
To force him from their arms.

PRUSIAS.

What! am I then
Reduc'd so low? an abject, fetter'd, king,
Less honour'd than the creature of his bounty!

ANTENOR.

Await, great Prusias, till the flood subsides.

PRUSIAS.

We will be guided by thy sage advice—
For nothing is too dark for thy keen glance
To pierce, nothing too deep for thee to fathom.
As for Perdiccas, he shall not behold
His father's face, till better thoughts, and time,
Have cool'd the fever of his blood—to thee,

Antenor! we commit our house, our cause,
Our person, and the state—and arm thee with
This signet, which, in stern emergency,
Shall be thy warrant.—Speed thee to observe
The temper of the crowd, and let us know
When the tumultuous tide begins to ebb—
Come, my Olympia, for to thee alone,
And to thy fond affection, can I look
For comfort in the troubles of this hour.

[*Exeunt, severally.*

SCENE III.

THE GARDENS OF THE PALACE.

Enter LYSANDRA.

LYSANDRA.

Oh! Goddess! from whose temple I return—
Thither repairing to present thee with
Most due oblations, bright-eyed Victory!

How shall I thank thee, who not only hast
Redeem'd my country, but who bring'st me back
All I hold dear, in honour, and unharm'd?
Too oft thy glories are obscur'd with tears;
Too oft the cypress mingles with thy wreath,
To me thou comest in thy fairest form.

Enter HYPSILUS.

HYPSILUS.

It is herself! Lysandra!

LYSANDRA.

Hypsilus!
Oh! for what bitter days of doubt and dread
Does this ecstatic moment pay me back!

HYPSILUS.

My thoughts were ever with thee—for Lysandra
Was it that I repuls'd her father's foes—
And toil'd for glory to deserve the look
That speaks approval from those glistening eyes—
Oh! there is nothing in this vapid world

Worth an exertion if we know not of
Some dear beloved object, far or near,
Whose smile is our reward.

LYSANDRA.

Thou art, indeed,
Entitled to my thanks, for thou hast fought
And conquer'd for Bithynia, and thy name
Blends with Perdiccas in the people's shout—
Where is my brother, who went forth from hence
Unknown to fame, but not unknown returns?
What means thy silence, and thy downcast look?
Nothing has harm'd him?

HYPSILUS.

Know'st thou not, Lysandra!
That he is banish'd from his father's presence?

LYSANDRA.

Perdiccas, with his laurels on his brow?
What mean'st thou?

HYPSILUS.

He, and Hannibal, and all

The rest of us who came triumphant home,
Receiv'd with open arms by all the city,
Found no admittance at the Palace gates.

LYSANDRA.

I 'm lost in painful wonder.

Enter PERDICCAS.

PERDICCAS.

Dearest sister!
Companion'd as I wish! by thee, at least,
I shall be greeted with a kind embrace.

LYSANDRA.

With transport and with pride—for thou hast done
As I was sure thou wouldst, and earn'd the praise
That waits on early valour's patriot deeds—
But solve the dark enigma which confounds me;
Our father's anger—when, with grateful joy,
He might have strain'd his hero to his breast.

PERDICCAS.

Our father is deceiv'd—a miscreant near him
Has work'd upon his mind.

LYSANDRA.

Full well I know
That all the Court, regretting the gay time
When pleasure was their sole and dear pursuit,
Hated the war, and him, especially,
But for whose counsels they had revell'd on,
Regardless of the ruin of Bithynia.
Yet what, my brother, can have drawn on thee
A father's public censure, in this hour,
I cannot e'en conjecture.

HYPSILUS.

Oh! Lysandra!
That, like the radiance of a star in heav'n,
Shin'st out amidst the darkness which surrounds thee,
Thou art too free from ev'ry taint of earth
To dream of guilt and malice like Antenor's.
His is the deed, and his the secret wish
To keep all, all, at distance from the king
Whose influence might be stronger than his own.
'Tis clear—and what we knew of him before
Makes it more certain.

LYSANDRA.

Aught may be believ'd
Of him who wanted to betray his country.
Oh! could he not be satisfied with pow'r
Such as no other boasted in this land?
But, to advance his base and selfish ends,
Must rend asunder nature's sacred ties,
And sow foul discord 'twixt the sire and son.

PERDICCAS.

I care not for myself—long disapprov'd,
And better pleas'd when living in the shade;
But this reception of our noble guest,
Of him whose energy has sav'd the realm,
Whose skill, whose arts, whose labours, in the field,
Won admiration from the common herd,
And, in the cause of Prusias were employ'd,—
With shame, and deep resentment, fills my breast—

LYSANDRA.

Is there no way to undeceive my father?

HYPSILUS.

String up Antenor to yon loftiest tree,—

Would I could see him swinging from its boughs,—
And something might be done.

PERDICCAS.

I 'll search him out—
He ventur'd to rebuke me—he shall rue it—
I will not bear—

LYSANDRA.

My brother! Oh, be calm,
Or thou wilt bring more evil on us all.—
My father's doubts would only be confirm'd
By any violence.—

PERDICCAS.

Then here we stand,
At home, yet banish'd; victors, but o'erthrown;
Crown'd, but rejected; guiltless, but condemn'd.—
Yet must it be a sharper pang to him
Who has done all, and who is wrong'd the most!
Here, in a land of strangers, and alone,
Chewing the bitter cud of his disgrace.
We should be near him, Hypsilus! and strive,
By mark'd respect, and friendly sympathy,
To mitigate his pain.

HYPSILUS. [*To* LYSANDRA.

Leave thee so soon!

After so long an absence!

LYSANDRA.

Hypsilus!

I 'd have thee go—I hop'd, indeed, this day
In brighter colours would have been array'd,
But all that we can do is due to him
Who has preserv'd Bithynia—with Perdiccas
Speed thee to soothe the ill-requited Chief;
Meanwhile will I, for I have still the means,
Approach my father, and attempt to quench
The wrath that blinds him, and that leads astray.

PERDICCAS.

Gently, my sister! with a cautious hand!
Antenor, else, will be an overmatch
For thy young counterplots.

LYSANDRA.

I will be cautious.

HYPSILUS.

Farewell—too soon farewell, but not for long—

Thy father will relent—how shall his heart
Resist the accents of Lysandra's voice?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A ROOM IN THE CASTLE OF LYBISSA.

Enter HANNIBAL, JUBAL, *and one or two Carthaginians.*

HANNIBAL.

Thousands have lately waited on my word,
And, in an instant, all have pass'd away.
Good Jubal! we have now no bustle here;
No crowd of friends—we shall be still enough
Now that the sun no longer shines upon us.
Where's Pamphilo and Cleon? Heretofore
They were alert, and are return'd unscath'd,
But come no more—this is the way of Fortune—
Oh! she 's a noble goddess! I will build
A temple to her.—Why, who comes here?
What! is there one, in all the world, will come?
By all the gods! 'tis the Philosopher!

Enter ZENO.

ZENO.

Great Hannibal!

HANNIBAL.

What! in the ancient strain!

JUBAL.

What can the dotard mean?

ZENO.

I merely come
To tell thee that I pity thy reverse.
I spoke a word, in thy behalf, at Court,
For which I am dismissed—but still I come
To venerate thy worth.

HANNIBAL.

Give me thy hand—
Kind, honest, man! Commanding intellect!
Thou sharp-edg'd instrument, too oft employed
To hurt the guiltless, and exalt the bad—
Cold, and envelop'd in thine own conceit,
I will avoid thee for this honest heart.

Welcome! 'most welcome! be thou frequent here,
Philosopher!

ZENO.

As often as I dare,
But now may stay no longer.

HANNIBAL.

Fare thee well!
Come back, and lecture me again on tactics.

[*Exit* ZENO.

Oh! what a world is this, where only those
Have feeling who are brainless! Some one else!

Enter PERDICCAS *and* HYPSILUS.

Yourselves afflicted with the same disease,
Ye have no need to shun th' infected house.

PERDICCAS.

Illustrious Chief! I sink into the earth;
And know not how to meet thy looks again,
So much am I o'erwhelm'd with shame that, here,

In this my country, Hannibal should feel
The biting edge of such indignity.

HANNIBAL.

Blush not for that, brave Prince! by which thyself
Art smitten equally—such things to me
Are common accidents.

PERDICCAS.

I cannot bear
Such outrage, and ingratitude, to thee.

HANNIBAL.

Thou 'rt young, Perdiccas! therefore art surpris'd;
Art young, and therefore mov'd.—I only wonder
When men keep faith, and fortune lasts a day.

HYPSILUS.

Thou hast redeem'd the kingdom—risk'd thy life;
Made victory the handmaid of Bithynia—
For this art thou disgrac'd!

PERDICCAS.

Oh! vile reward!
Astounding wrong that angers me to madness!
Canst thou be patient?

HANNIBAL.

I should think as soon
To lose my patience if the wind did change,
Or if the springs were dried by summer's heat,
Or winter brought us hazy weather. Prince!
I stood upon the pinnacle of fame;
Rome trembled, and the world was in amaze—
Nations observ'd my steps with anxious eyes,
Armies, before me, melted like the snow—
Conquest obey'd my voice—think of all this!
Then think of Zama! think of Carthage too!
My country, that I serv'd from my youth up,
That turn'd me out, like a vile criminal,
To beg and wander.—What can happen now
To change the steady motion of my pulse,
Or my cheek's colour? What has chanc'd to-day

Is usual, and the customary course.
Baseness is human nature—and this world
A stage for knaves to act upon and prosper;
Of which Antenor is a goodly proof.

PERDICCAS.

By that false servant is the king deceived.
Give me the traitor's letter to Eumenes!
I 'll send it, through Lysandra, to my father,
And thus unmask him.

HANNIBAL.

'T would be sent in vain.
Antenor, with his art, would make the king
Believe the scroll a forgery.—Dear Prince!
Thou must go buy a bridle for thy warmth;
I fear me much that single word of thine
Has told Antenor all.

PERDICCAS.

And if it has?

HANNIBAL.

He may requite thee.

PERDICCAS.

Wretch! I fear him not!

HANNIBAL.

At least restrain thyself—we must remain
Still as the dead; that is our only chance
To satisfy thy father of our truth.
And, e'en let us be prudent as we will,
I much suspect that those who rais'd the storm
Will not allow it to go down—perhaps—
I must to flight again.

PERDICCAS.

The gods forbid!
Fly from Bithynia, by thee preserv'd!
This land to thee be false as Syria!

HANNIBAL.

Hope still the best—but I must be prepar'd.

HYPSILUS.

Let the worst come—I have, by happy chance,
The means of serving thee. An instant since,

I was inform'd that, at the neighb'ring strand,
A vessel is arriv'd, which brings me news
That my unkind old kinsman is no more,
And I am call'd to rule the vacant realm—
Little it is—but independent still.—
That vessel now is anchor'd in the port.

HANNIBAL.

My gen'rous boy! I should rejoice to owe
My safety to thy hand.—Have the ship ready!
Ready to slip her cable—and be sure
No living soul besides ourselves, and her
With whom I know thou sharest all thy thoughts,
And may be trusted as her brother here,
Obtains the slightest inkling of our plan.

HYPSILUS.

Thou may'st rely.

HANNIBAL.

I do most perfectly,
And feel a mountain lifted from my breast,
Secure of a retreat—and now, my Thracian!

Since thou art soon to reign, and we are left
At more abundant leisure than we wish,
I'll take a leaf out of old Zeno's book,
And give thee rules for life—which may avail
Perdiccas too, in days remote from these.
Art thou attentive?

HYPSILUS.

I'm all ear.

HANNIBAL.

Buy cheap;
Sell dear:—that 's virtue in my country.

PERDICCAS.

Nay;
We are not merchants.

HANNIBAL.

But be fond of gold!
Gold is a god! when Scipio prevail'd,
And glory, fame, dominion, all was lost—

No Punic eye was wet—but when the tribute
Call'd forth their pelf and reach'd their darling hoards,
Each man appear'd distracted; rent his hair;
Burst out in cries and tears—it made me laugh,—
Oh! how it anger'd them!—it made me laugh
To see their passion.

HYPSILUS. [*To* PERDICCAS.

I have often noted
That when his noble spirit is depress'd,
To Carthage still his constant thoughts return.

HANNIBAL.

Now here 's another! seek not to correct
Aught that is wrong—ne'er meddle with old evils;
Wink at all sinners.—I beheld rich thieves
Fleecing the State—grave magistrates distort
The laws to sanction plunder—I expos'd them,
And purg'd abuses from the suff'ring land;
For this I am an exile! But enough,
Enough, for once—and now depart from hence,
And show yourselves in the frequented streets,

As if without a motive, or a care.
Meanwhile will I such preparation make
As will be needful should mischance arrive—
If any whisper reach your ears, be prompt,
And quickly send me word.

PERDICCAS.

Depend on us!
Yet will I not believe—

HANNIBAL.

E'en as thou wilt.
But, Hypsilus, have thou the ship unmoor'd.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

THE PALACE.

Enter ANTENOR.

ANTENOR.

THIS makes an end, if Prusias will consent.
Once more, at my request, Flaminius comes
With a demand that cuts the knot at once.
Prusias, I know, will have compunctious twinges;
Yet may submit, distracted as he is
With jealousies and fears—and urg'd along
By his offended Queen. But, lest the Prince
Should rouse the populace, I must employ
This signet, and restrain his steps awhile,

Till all is well accomplish'd—and, perhaps,
Once lodg'd within a dungeon's massive walls,
He will not find the passage out again;
Some men have died in prison—and he dropt
A word that makes it plain he knows too much.
Better at once to rid myself of all
These stumbling-blocks—and live without a fear.

Enter PRUSIAS *and* OLYMPIA.

PRUSIAS.

Well! good Antenor! may we hope that Brusa
Looks like itself, and is at rest again?
Is faction still'd—and may I soon behold
My son, for whom his sister pleads in tones
That reach a father's heart?

ANTENOR.

With her and thee
Affection is his gentle advocate.
But I, entrusted with thy sacred person,
Must not deceive my king.—There is less noise,

But not less danger; for the citizens
In sullen silence feed rebellious thoughts;
The Prince is at Lybissa frequently,
Sucking in poison from the wily exile,
And, thence returning, walks the crowded streets,
Not of the populace to be forgotten.
And, at the back of these domestic broils,
A greater peril menaces the realm;
For Rome, incens'd that her esteem'd ally
Has by thy conq'ring troops been trampled down,
Says, in these letters, that, with all her strength,
She comes to level Brusa with the dust,
Unless, as an atonement, and a pledge
Of quiet for the world, into her hands
Thou wilt deliver him who is the source,
And only cause, of all thy anxious cares.
This day Flaminius returns to Brusa.

OLYMPIA.

Thou canst not doubt a moment—what they seek
Is what we wish—they offer to perform

For us, what, for ourselves, we know not how
To execute, yet would have done.

PRUSIAS.

I feel
As if a crushing blow had stunn'd my senses.
My mind, confounded by the crowd of ills
That, in such varied forms, have gather'd round us,
Fails, and deserts me at my utmost need.
I said the Romans should not reach him here.
I told him he might trust my royal word.

OLYMPIA.

False as he is and treacherous to thee,
Still is thy promise binding?

PRUSIAS.

There are gods
Who o'er the rights of hospitality
Presiding watch, and ever will avenge
The guest abandon'd by his perjur'd host.

OLYMPIA.

Wait then till Brusa is a heap of ruins,
Thyself, thy wife, in fetters sent to Rome,
And all Bithynia sunk into a province.

PRUSIAS.

Let him begone then—bid him leave this realm,
And seek a harbour in some other land—
Thus were we freed—but, to receive him here,
To lull him into fond security,
And then betray him to his enemies!
Oh! 'tis too base a crime.

ANTENOR.

Yet thus alone
Canst thou avert the whelming force of Rome.

PRUSIAS.

We must have time to ponder on this matter.

ANTENOR.

Flaminius will exact a prompt reply.

PRUSIAS.

What tyranny is this that drives a king
To acts which his indignant soul abhors?

OLYMPIA.

Dost thou forget that he thou seek'st to save,
With thine own son is leagu'd against thy throne?

PRUSIAS.

I had forgotten all in my disgust
At dipping my own hands in infamy.
I will not see this Roman. Thou, Antenor!
Tell him from us that we detest the deed
To which, by his superior power alone,
Against our will, he forces our consent—
There—not another word—and now I go
In deep seclusion to conceal myself,
And hide my shame from ev'ry human eye.

OLYMPIA.

Thou hast preserv'd thy crown!

PRUSIAS.

But I have dimm'd
Its lustre, and for ever! and this deed
Will, to the end of everlasting time,
Stamp foul dishonour on the name of Prusias.

[*Exeunt* PRUSIAS *and* OLYMPIA.

ANTENOR.

At last he has surrender'd.—I have now
Only to reap the crop.—The troops who serv'd
Under the orders of the Carthaginian,
To parts remote already are dispatch'd,
And none remain within, or near, the city,
But such as will not murmur but obey.
Now for my next precaution—that secur'd,
To the Lybissan Castle will I speed;
And, lest my crafty foe should snuff the scent
Of coming danger, with assuring words
Set him at ease and throw him off his guard.
At length my star prevails;—the thorns and briers

That vex'd my path will soon be swept away;
And once again I shall be master here.

[*Exit* ANTENOR.

SCENE II.

A ROOM IN THE CASTLE OF LYBISSA.

Enter HANNIBAL *and* JUBAL.

HANNIBAL.

Oh! Carthage! is it well that Hannibal
Should thus be cruel Fortune's lasting sport?
Ungrateful land! but thou art in thy wane;
The plague of bloated commerce is upon thee;
Fierce factions tear thee; sordid maxims please,
And self-debasement slopes thy path to ruin.
Perfidious Rome beholds th' ignoble change,
Beholds and smiles.—Jubal! is there arriv'd
No message from the Prince?

JUBAL.

No foot, this morn,
Has ever sought the castle.

HANNIBAL.

That should mean,
The sea is calm, nor any rocks in sight—
But who draws near? Antenor!

Enter ANTENOR.

ANTENOR.

Honoured Chief!
Mine office, far more grateful than the last,
Which most unwillingly I did perform,
Permits me now at least to give thee hopes
Of brighter prospects, and more tranquil days.
I come from Prusias, whose capricious wrath
I 've sought to mitigate, and not in vain.

HANNIBAL.

Not with surprise I hear Antenor's words.
I still depended on his friendly zeal.

ANTENOR.

I see the soul of Hannibal disdains
To harp on injuries.—Thou wert indeed
Unjustly treated.—Prusias now relents;
But yet, for kings must not appear in haste,
He will not summon thee at once; e'er long
He means to place thee in his former favour.

HANNIBAL.

I am your debtor ever, good Antenor!
The king will find me ready when he will.

ANTENOR.

I wish'd to chase disquiet from thy mind,
So came at once—the harbinger of that
Which will be better.—Banish ev'ry care,
Illustrious Chief! and soon expect to bask
In the full sunshine—for a while farewell.

HANNIBAL.

Farewell, Antenor! [*Exit* ANTENOR.

JUBAL.

Then the cloud *is* past!

HANNIBAL.

No, no—some darker tempest is at hand.
Get all things ready and bestir thyself;
This night must we be gone. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

THE PALACE GARDENS.

Enter LYSANDRA.

LYSANDRA.

Where, where is Hypsilus? I send in vain—
I search in vain—no where can he be found.
Is he too plung'd into the hideous depth
Of some dark dungeon? What does all this mean?
Am I awake? or does some horrid dream

Delude my senses? I have tried, once more,
To reach my father—he will not be seen—
And disregards his children and his realm.
'Tis he—Oh! Hypsilus! Oh! save him! save him!

Enter HYPSILUS.

HYPSILUS.

Save whom?

LYSANDRA.

Perdiccas—by Antenor's act
Perdiccas has been seiz'd—my faultless brother
Is now within a dungeon's loathsome walls.

HYPSILUS.

The kingdom's heir! By what authority?

LYSANDRA.

Alas! I fear, the King's.

HYPSILUS.

On what pretext?

LYSANDRA.

Reasons of state—that opportune resource
Where there is not a crime.

HYPSILUS.

When was it done?

LYSANDRA.

An hour ago the rumour reach'd mine ears;
And, ever since, by such as I could trust,
Have I been seeking thee throughout the city.

HYPSILUS.

They could not find me there—for I was gone
To shield another victim from destruction.

LYSANDRA.

What other victim?

HYPSILUS.

Hannibal, who fears
Approaching danger in this land, and if
It comes, will shun it by escape to mine.

LYSANDRA.

What does he fear more than has chanc'd already?

HYPSILUS.

He knows not yet; but, after what has chanc'd,
He who so long, by restless enemies,
Has been pursued and hunted through the world,
May well remain in doubtful apprehension.
But, oh! Lysandra, whilst, on his account,
I hurried up and down with anxious haste,
My occupation still was cheer'd by thoughts
That brought before me happiness and thee.
The vessel which now waits for Hannibal
Has brought me news that I am now the lord
Of not a large, but yet a lovely, home,
By Romans yet unvisited, and free,
Of which I fancied thee, in calmer hours,
When fears and dangers should be past and gone,
The mistress and the queen—with thy nice care
Spreading fresh blossoms o'er the grateful land,
And gladd'ning all the days of Hypsilus.

LYSANDRA.

Bright, heavenly visions, that light up my heart
With gleams of bliss, too dear to be resign'd;
But interrupted now by thick'ning clouds,
That overcast the sunshine of our hopes.
Not now, oh! now we must not think of joy,
Whilst such convulsions shake my father's house,
And a wrong'd brother calls aloud for help.

HYPSILUS.

On that sweet prospect shall my soul repose.
But how, oh! how can I assist my friend?
What can I do but hover round the door
Of his lone prison house, and watch, and wait?
There is a mystery in this bold crime,
This daring swoop upon the noblest prey,
I cannot fathom, and that makes me view
These first aggressions as the threat'ning drops
That harbinger some awful storm's approach.
The busy fiend, that rules the monarch's mind,

Is now invested with the regal power,
And what, in his despotic villainy,
He seeks to compass, still is veil'd in shades
Black as his thoughts. Till now I knew not fear;
But, in this dread uncertainty, I feel,
Not for myself, the shudder of alarm,
And know not where to turn, or look for aid.

LYSANDRA.

Look to the gods! dear Hypsilus! the gods!
Who, from the starry mansions where they sit
In majesty supreme, look down upon
The struggles and afflictions of mankind,
And never fail to shield the innocent.

HYPSILUS.

Unequall'd maid! how noble are thy thoughts!
Thou teachest me aright—my sinking spirit
Mounts up again—and I despond no more.

Enter two Attendants.

ATTENDANT.

Lady! retreat! retreat within the Palace!
There is no safety here—the furious crowd,
Distracted by the seizure of the Prince,
Rush wildly through the streets.

HYPSILUS.

Then I must there;
To guide and to restrain.

LYSANDRA.

Oh! go not!—stay!—

[*Exit* HYPSILUS.

He 's gone!—This is too much; how shall I bear
The keen suspense? But what I can, I will—
To my sire's threshold instantly return,
Nor leave it till I win him to come forth,
And bring these wild disorders to a close.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A ROOM IN THE CASTLE OF LYBISSA.

HANNIBAL *is discovered asleep on his couch.*

HANNIBAL.

On, Carthaginians! charge with either wing—
The blowing wind has fill'd their eyes with dust.
Now, Varro! 'tis my turn—Ha! they give way—
Th' accursed eagle flies—pursue! pursue!
Strike down Emilius! Rome is at our feet.

[*Wakes.*

Methought I was at Cannæ—and mine ears
Still ring with martial noises—in that hour
I little thought that, when my head was gray,
I should be here, and thus—no matter—I
Can meet or this or worse. How still is all!
The sun is set, and, since the early morn,
No friend have I beheld—but Hypsilus

Has sent to let me know that all is ready.
There 's something in the wind—or, long ere this,
They had sped hither—and, whate'er it is,
That something bodes no good to Hannibal.
When will the messenger return I sent
For tidings to the city?—Hark! he comes.

Enter a Page.

What hast thou seen? What hast thou heard?

PAGE.

The city
Is in dismay—and by one sole event
Engross'd and sadden'd.

HANNIBAL.

What event?

PAGE.

The Prince
Has been arrested.

HANNIBAL.

Ha! thus opes the plot.

Antenor is at work.—A bold beginning!
What is the Prince accus'd of?

PAGE.

'Tis unknown.
But the King's signet authoriz'd the deed.

HANNIBAL.

Well! this explains his absence. Didst thou see
Aught worth the mentioning?

PAGE.

Nothing, my Lord!
But a few Roman officers.

HANNIBAL.

But what?

PAGE.

I saw some Romans at the palace gate.

HANNIBAL.

Call'st thou that nothing? This accounts for all—

The seizure of the Prince—Antenor's smiles
And gracious visit—to the postern speed!
See if the steeds are harness'd, and at hand;
Tell Jubal I approach.

[*Exit Page.*

They come for me!
Into their hands was I to be deliver'd.
Antenor, I confess, has play'd his part
In a most able manner; Prusias
Has nobly kept his promise—and the Prince
Is coop'd in durance vile lest he should struggle
In Hannibal's behalf—the tricksy jade
Was kinder than her wont to send the ship
At this hard pinch; but I was right, it seems,
To sit with girded loins and staff in hand.
Now let them come and take the empty nest;
They 'll find the bird is flown.

Re-enter Page.

PAGE.

My Lord! my Lord!

HANNIBAL.

Well—are they ready? Speak! What ails thee, boy?
What makes thee tremble thus?

PAGE.

Jubal is slain!
I stumbled o'er his corse—and, at the gate,
There stand a crowd of armed men—I saw them
And hurried back.

HANNIBAL.

Then I am caught at last!
Antenor has outwitted Hannibal.
Treason is shrewd, and arm'd at ev'ry point.
Poor, faithful Jubal!—here, then, is the close;
And, after the hard chase, and all my turns,
Here am I in their toils; but, e'en for this,
Long have I been prepar'd, and still can laugh
At all their perfidy. Boy! let me have
A goblet of that Chian wine—I'm thirsty!

[*Exit Page.*

They would have seiz'd me as I sallied forth,
And shipp'd me off to Rome, to grace a triumph!
Never shall Rome that triumph see! Nor he
Who all but enter'd Rome, a conqueror,
Through her throng'd streets be ever dragg'd in chains!

[*The Page returns with the goblet.*

'Tis well—and now haste to the other gate
And tell me what thou seest. [*Exit Page.*

Come! faithful friend!

[*Takes off his ring.*

That dost within thy little round contain
Defeat of Roman malice, sure release,
Freedom and rest—that, for this hour foreseen,
Hast been about me—come, and aid me now!

[*Unscrews his ring, and drops the poison into the goblet.*

With this libation, to th' avenging furies,
Thus, Prusias! I devote thy perjur'd head!

[*Drinks the poison.*

And Rome! for thee, that hast to this pursued me,
And set thy burning mark upon the land

Which, though ungrateful, is my country still,
Ride on in thy career of blood and crime,
To conquest adding conquest, realm to realm,
And spread thine empire o'er a subject world;
Till, at the last, by thine own weight and guilt
Pull'd down, thyself shalt fall—barbarian hordes
Rush in and riot in thy palaces,
And make thee such a waste that after ages
Shall gaze, and shudder, at thy just reward.
Let me sit down—I feel an icy chill
Shoot through my veins—Perdiccas! Hypsilus!

Enter PERDICCAS *and* HYPSILUS.

PERDICCAS.

The people rose—attack'd my prison-house,
And set me free.

HYPSILUS.

Antenor is no more.
Thinking the outbreak slight, he ventur'd forth
To stem it; but, no sooner had the crowd
Caught sight of him, than, with a furious yell

They rush'd, and, ere he could escape by flight,
Dispatch'd him with their weapons.

HANNIBAL.

He deserv'd it.

PERDICCAS.

But wherefore does thine eye remain so dim?

HANNIBAL.

Know'st thou not, Prince! the Romans are arriv'd?

PERDICCAS.

The Romans!

HANNIBAL.

Ay—and are arriv'd for me.

PERDICCAS.

They shall not reach thee!

HANNIBAL.

I have taken care
Of that myself.

PERDICCAS.

What mean'st thou?

HANNIBAL.

When I found
The postern guarded, and escape denied,
I *drank* security. [*Points to the goblet.*

PERDICCAS.

What hast thou done?

HYPSILUS.

My more than father!

HANNIBAL.

But reliev'd the world,
Perdiccas! from a troublesome old man.
'Tis better thus; for, had my foes been foil'd,
They would have hasten'd back with such a force
As e'en thy valour, Prince! had check'd in vain;
And I would not have had Bithynia hurt
To save the remnant of an useless life.

PERDICCAS.

Relentless Rome! that art the cause of all!

HYPSILUS.

Great gods! he grows more pale! he sinks!

HANNIBAL.

My curses
Are utter'd and recorded.—My last breath
In offices less stern shall be employ'd.—
Ye gods! who watch o'er virtue, bless these youths,
And ever guard them from the Romans! now
My sleepless enemies may take their rest,
For Hannibal is—gone! [*Dies.*

Enter FLAMINIUS *and Romans.*

PERDICCAS.

Thou com'st too late,
Flaminius!—or is thy purpose here
To trample on a lifeless victim?

FLAMINIUS.

Dead!

How came he by his death?

HYPSILUS.

He did not choose

To grace a Roman triumph.

FLAMINIUS.

He did well.

That Rome could not be tranquil whilst he liv'd,
Was a perpetual homage to himself,
But, Rome deliver'd from her lasting fears,
I am exempted from a hateful task.
Let me approach— [*Approaches the body.*
And is this Hannibal?
Our mighty enemy? and now—what? nothing!
The restless, strife-exciting Hannibal?
So pale, so still, so motionless! Oh! death!

Thou read'st a lesson e'en to Roman pride,
That, in an instant, bring'st to this, the frame,
The potent mind, that could disturb a world.
This was the Chief, so oft by glory crown'd,
Who, for so long, resistless, kept his way,
Holding, as two leash'd greyhounds, in his grasp
Fortune and Vict'ry; who, oppos'd in vain
By nature's barriers, to our very doors
Brought dire defeat and terror, vanquishing
All our best captains, all but Scipio;
And, for a season, kept the world in doubt
Who, for the future, was to be its master.
Nor could reverse or danger, grief or age,
The stirring spirit tame, that, to the last,
Its purpose still pursued, and, at the last,
Resolv'd on freedom—ages shall roll on
And not produce a greater than lies here.

[*The curtain drops.*

THE END.

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